

The Intelligence Community and National Security Policy

I. Introduction

Scope: To examine the role of the intelligence community in the formulation of national security policy.

Background: Pearl Harbor was the genesis of the intelligence community as we know it today. Investigation of that national tragedy showed there was a great deal of intelligence available, but it was scattered in bits and pieces about various government departments.

National Security Act: The National Security Act of 1947 was a major move to tidy up both the intelligence-producing and the decision-making houses of the executive branch. That Act produced CIA; the Office of the Director of Central Intelligence; and the National Security Council.

National Intelligence: The Agency, as you know, is only one member of the intelligence community, but

it has one special charge none of the others hold. This is the evaluation and dissemination of finished national intelligence.

National intelligence is intelligence which transcends the exclusive competence of any one department or agency and is required for the formulation of national security policy.

II. The Intelligence Community

Members: Nine agencies make up the intelligence community. These are:

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CIA
State Department's INR
DIA
NSA
AEC
FBI
Army
Navy
Air Force

Only CIA is responsible directly to the President.

DCI Role: As I noted, the National Security Act established a new job--the Director of Central Intelligence. This means that,

along with being Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, Mr. Helms also is the President's chief intelligence officer. As such, he is responsible for guidance and coordination of all US foreign intelligence activities.

USIB:

Graphic

The United States Intelligence Board was established in 1958 to advise and assist the DCI.

The Board is chaired by the Director in his role as the President's senior intelligence officer. CIA is represented by the Deputy Director.

The other members are State, DIA, AEC, the FBI, and NSA. Since the creation of DIA, the three services are no longer members, but they are active--and vocal--observers at each Thursday's meeting.

USIB Functions:

USIB has three principle functions:

- it establishes and reviews national intelligence targets and the priorities assigned to them;

- it continually reviews foreign intelligence activities; and
- it reviews the ^{IN}ational Intelligence Estimates

Dissent: Normally, the Board reaches its decisions by agreement. There is provision for dissent, however. Those of you who have watched the progress of National Intelligence Estimates know that this right of dissent is frequently exercised in footnotes taken by one or more of the agencies to indicate an opinion different from the majority view.

Product: There are three types of national intelligence produced under the USIB charter:

- the National Intelligence Estimate which assesses the outlook, future trends, and policies of foreign governments;
- the Central Intelligence Bulletin which is spot information of immediate interest; and

- the National Intelligence Survey which is basic data on a given country.

Both the Estimates and the Bulletin are produced specifically for and used by, the men who must make decisions on our national security.

III. The National Security Council

Composition: I would like to talk now about these decision makers--the National Security Council.

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The NSC was created by the National Security Act and is composed of:

- The President
- The Vice President
- The Secretary of State
- The Secretary of Defense
- The Director, Office of Emergency Preparedness

The DCI is not a member--he is an advisor as is the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.

Other cabinet officers, such as the Secretary of the Treasury, can and do,

attend NSC meetings when invited by the President. I might note that the Attorney General is a frequent participant.

Background: By law, the NSC is to "advise the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign and military policies relating to the national security....

This does not mean the President has to use the Council, however, and neither Kennedy nor Johnson did to any great extent.

President Nixon, on the other hand, does rely on the NSC mechanism and the day he took office signed a directive reviving and reorganizing the structure.

Organization:

The present NSC organization is designed to provide for orderly decision making with all the policy alternatives carefully weighed and examined.

NSC Staff:

Graphic

The primary responsibility for seeing that this machinery is working lies with Henry A. Kissinger, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.

Kissinger has a staff of more than 70 people to help him. The staff is drawn from various government agencies including CIA.

Below the Security Council itself, there are three senior committees.

USC:

The Under Secretaries Committee replaced the Senior Interdepartmental Group. It reviews various interagency activities overseas. Usually these are matters which do not require NSC consideration. This Committee is chaired by the Under Secretary of State and its members are:

DCI
Deputy Secretary of Defense
Assistant for National Security Affairs
Chairman, Joint Chiefs

RG:

The NSC Review Group goes over papers intended for NSC consideration. The idea is to make sure the material is really ready for Presidential consideration. Kissinger chairs this Group and I am the CIA member. Other members are senior representatives from State, DOD, the Joint Chiefs and OEP. The head of USIA usually attends.

Defense Policy

Review:

The third of the senior committees is the Defense Policy Review Committee. This group performs essentially the same function as the Review Group, but deals exclusively with matters of defense policy. Kissinger chairs this committee and the DCI is the CIA member. Other members are:

Under Secretary of State
Deputy Secretary of Defense
Chairman, Joint Chiefs
Chairman, President's Council of
Economic Advisors
Director, Bureau of the Budget

IGs:

Below these committees are the five Interdepartmental Groups. These groups are broken down by geographic areas and are simply the Johnson administration's Interdepartmental Regional Groups. They are chaired by the appropriate Assistant Secretary of State and the DDP division chief is the Agency representative. There also is one Group at this level which deals with military matters. This is the Political-Military Group.

There also are ad hoc groups set up from time to time to handle NSC work.

NSSMs:

Most NSC papers begin life as a National Security Study Memorandum. This memo comes from Kissinger and outlines what is to be done, by whom, and when. Nearly 80 NSSMs have been issued since 20 January.

Work:

Usually the work is done at the IG level with State drafting the policy paper. These papers state the problem and lay out the facts. CIA frequently provides an intelligence input. These papers always present a series of options, but they do not recommend any particular option.

When the IG is satisfied with the paper, it is forwarded to the Review Group. We go over the paper to see if it tells the President what he needs to know and gives him realistic choices of action. The papers often are sent back for re-working. The next step is the NSC itself. Usually the DCI will brief the Council on intelligence aspects of the subject under consideration.

These briefings are short and concise.

They are prepared by OCI.

NSDMs:

While there may be a good deal of deliberation and discussion at an NSC meeting, the President does not make his decision on the spot.

Mr. Nixon seems to prefer deliberating over his possible actions. When the decision is made, it is issued as a National Security Decision Memorandum. This memo directs the heads of appropriate agencies to take whatever action the President has decided on.

IV Summation

SALT

Perhaps the best way to conclude would be to give you an example of how intelligence plays a key role in national security policy making.

In two weeks we will begin arm³ limitation talks with the Soviets.

One absolutely essential feature of any treaty is the ability of the intelligence community to keep an eye on the other side to make sure there is no cheating.

Before a decision could be made to enter into talks, a great deal of intelligence input was required.

Some of this was in the form of USIB-approved estimates; some was the product of ad hoc committees. But all of it was aimed at presenting the President with an accurate and substantive account of what his intelligence community could and could not do in the critical area of monitoring an arms treaty.